

# Phillips Overpowering Starting Not The Problem As MHS Girls Split Two

The Mulvane High School softball team is starting well. Finishing is the problem.

For the second straight time, the Wildcats looked strong in the first game of a doubleheader, then slipped in the second game for a split Monday night, April 3, at Andover Central. The 'Cats rolled to an 8-0 win in the opener behind a four-hit shutout by Whitney Phillips. In the nightcap, the host Jaguars scored four runs in the first inning, then held off a late rally to defeat the 'Cats, 5-4. Mulvane is now 2-2 on the season, 1-1 in AVCTL Division III.

"We're not exactly off to the best start," said MHS head coach Charles Mason. "The first two doubleheaders have been the same. We come out really strong in the first game, then we basically have one bad inning in the second game, play catch-up the rest of the way, and come up short. We need to develop more of a killer instinct so we can put games away."

Whitney Phillips overpowered the Jags in the opener, allowing just four hits while striking out nine. Offensively, Amy Phillips was 3-for-3 with four runs scored, and Kourtney Bell had three hits, including a two-run home run in the fifth inning, scored three runs, and drove in four.

In the second game, Mulvane fell behind 4-0, then 5-1 after three innings. The 'Cats got two runs back in the fifth, highlighted by an RBI single by catcher Stephanie Hughes. Mulvane cut it to 5-4 when Amy Phillips singled and eventually scored on a wild pitch. Hughes singled and courtesy runner Maddie Wise stole second with two out in the seventh, but she was stranded. Amy Phillips had three more hits while Tara Roberts and Hughes each added two.

The Wildcats had similar results in their season-opening doubleheader at home against Rose Hill Thursday, March 30. The Wildcats rolled in the opener, 6-1, but the visiting Rockets used a four-run fourth inning to win the second game, 5-4.

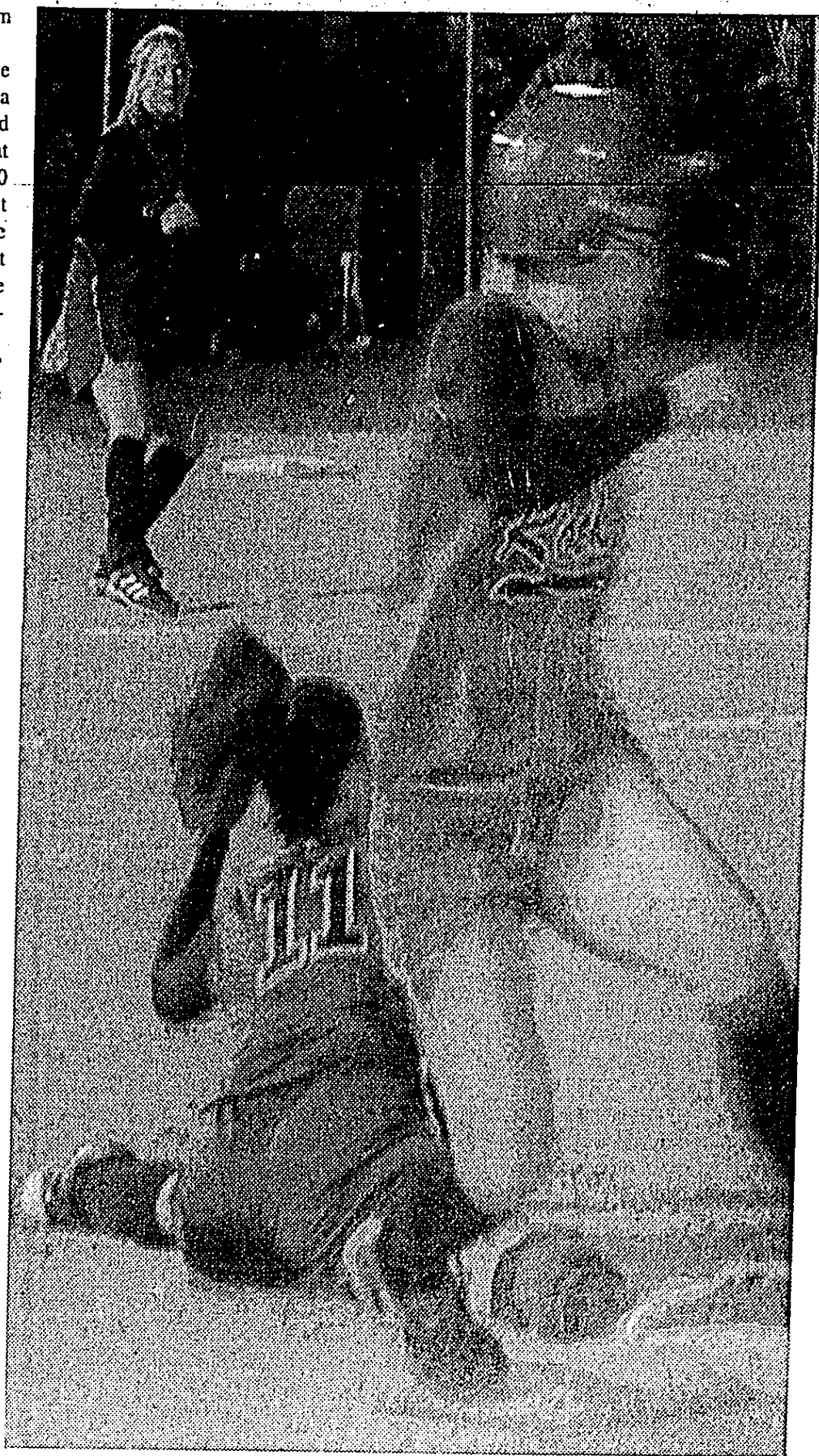
"I told their coach that we might as well put it down as a split beforehand, because it seems to always happen," said Mason. "Again, we looked really good in the first game against a very tough opponent, but we had a bad inning in the second game, and we missed some key scoring opportunities late in the game. We just need to become more consistent in those situations."

Whitney Phillips held Rose Hill to one run on two hits over seven innings in the opener, walking four and striking out six, and retiring the last seven batters. Mulvane's final two runs came in the sixth on a two-run double by Hughes that made the score 6-1. Roberts had two hits and scored twice.

In the second game, Amy Phillips doubled and scored in the first inning to tie the game, then gave the 'Cats a 2-1 lead with a homer to left-center in the third. The Rockets scored four runs on four hits and three Mulvane errors for a 5-2 lead. The 'Cats fought back with two in the fifth, thanks to back-to-back RBI doubles by Lisa Cillessen and Amanda Hagerman, but the last eight Wildcat batters were retired.

"We're getting great production on offense," said Mason. "The top of the order has been really effective, and we've got some first-timers at new positions in the field like Kourtney at third, Lisa at second, and Jordan Owens, who came in for Kourtney in the second game, who are all contributing. We just need to find a way to finish games when we have the chance."

The Wildcats will not play again until Monday, April 10, when they host Andover. The first pitch is scheduled for 4:30 p.m.



Cats' Amy Phillips watches Amanda Hagerman (11) stretch out for her throw at 1st base

#### FIRST GAME

Mulvane 201 120 2-8 9 3  
Andover Central 000 000 0-0 4 2  
Whitney Phillips and Stephanie Hughes, Armagost and Huelskamp  
HR—Kourtney Bell (M).

#### SECOND GAME

Mulvane 010 021 0-4 11 0  
Andover Central 401 000 x-5 8 3  
Christy Hartley, Courtney Maples 4, and Stephanie Hughes; Rupert and Huelskamp.

#### FIRST GAME

Rose Hill 000 010 0-1 2 3  
Mulvane 100 212 x-6 5 3  
Nicole Dunphy and Christine Karlake; Whitney Phillips and Stephanie Hughes.

#### SECOND GAME

Rose Hill 100 400 0-5 8 1  
Mulvane 101 020 0-4 6 3  
Nicole Dunphy and Christine Karlake; Courtney Maples, Christy Hartley 4, and Stephanie Hughes.  
HR—Amy Phillips (M).